



# Youth Matters

Rochester-Monroe County Youth Bureau



Issue 6 111 Westfall Road, Room 814, Rochester NY, 14620 Ph. 585-753-6455 [www.monroecounty.gov](http://www.monroecounty.gov) August 2006



## Greetings from Executive Director Karla Boyce

The Youth Bureau staff has been extremely busy this summer with many site visits both by the YAR board and Keisha French our YAR coordinator. I joined their site visit at The Center for Youth shelter. Youth were joined together from all over the city to work outdoors to clean-up flower beds and general clean-up. I was very impressed by their enthusiasm and energy.

In addition, I went out to two site visits on our summer TANF programs. I spent time at both PRYD and Catholic Family Center. Youth at both sites were engaged in life skills training and planning for their community projects. The youth from PRYD will be having a car wash benefit and the proceeds will be presented to The Ronald McDonald House.

The Rochester - Monroe County Youth Bureau will host training in partnership with the City of Rochester, Youth Services Bureau on Effective Black Parenting. Chris Dandino has been working with Jackie  
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## Willie W. Lightfoot Youth Advocates 2006

For more than 10 years, the Rochester-Monroe County Youth Bureau has worked with the Monroe County Legislature to identify and honor exceptional youth and youth advocates for their contributions to our community. Each year, outstanding youth and adults have been nominated for consideration as award recipients. This year County Executive Maggie Brooks and the Youth Bureau's Youth Board recognized 25 individuals.



*Above: County Executive Maggie Brooks hands out a Youth Advocate Award to Jillian K. McCord.*

**Youth Advocates:** Ms. Kaye Adams, Mr. Dale Barton, Dr. William Cala, Mr. Dermot Fogarty, Ms. Vicki Gouveia, Mr. Michael Headd, Mr. Eugene Oberst, Ms. Marilynn Patterson-Grant, Ms. Carol Wasilewski.

**Youth Awards for ages 16-21:** Michelle Centola, Cynthia Centola, Brittany Lauren Greco, Mark Juhas, Michael Koenig, Christie Leszczynski, Thomas Mathew, Eric Mull, Shannon O'Donnell, Donald Richard Polaski, Thomas Quinn, Bryan Rague, Melanie Schwab, and

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**Building Assets Through Positive Youth Development for All Youth**





*Rochester youth play tennis at Genesee Valley Park at the Kick-Off Rally.*

## **FREE Sector 8 Youth Tennis Program**

The Association of New York State Youth Bureaus (ANYSYB) hosted the 2005 conference here in Rochester and was proud to have the United States Tennis Association (USTA) as one of their sponsors. The USTA Eastern Section presented several demonstrations on tennis programming at the conference and it was well perceived by Youth Workers from all over New York State. At this time, it became apparent that there was a complimentary relationship between the USTA and the ANYSYB resulting in collaboration. The partnership entailed USTA grant funding through the ANYSYB for the start up of nine brand new tennis programs.

Both County Executive Maggie Brooks and Executive Director Karla Boyce of the Rochester-Monroe County Youth Bureau were excited to finally have the opportunity to bring the skill of tennis to the youth of Monroe County. So upon the news of this funding opportunity, our AmeriCorps worker was directed by Boyce to partner with local tennis comrades to write the USTA/ANYSYB Grant. After partnering with the City of Rochester Recreation and Youth Services, a grant was written to develop a new program teaching under-privileged youth tennis and life skills.

It was with sheer delight that the Youth Bureau announced the granting of over \$7,000 to start the Sector 8 Youth Tennis Program. The program aims to teach youth basic tennis skills, including multiple swings, volleying, and score keeping. It also aspires to provide youth with an avenue of hope by building strongholds in the community. Tennis enables youth to use time positively and is a lifelong sport that will create well-rounded individuals. The goal of the program is to mold a program that the community desires as to ensure sustainability. It is the hope of the Youth Bureau that the community will see the invaluable nature of this summer program and will continue to support it in future years.

The program began on July 10<sup>th</sup> and is located at

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*Greetings cont. from page 1*

Campbell to process applications and awarding slots for this very interesting training.

We are pleased to have participated in Rochester Works Digital Afternoons. Sixteen-year-old Jessica Callahan has joined the Rochester-Monroe County Youth Bureau through Digital Afternoons, an initiative from Rochester Works, Inc., in conjunction with New York Wired for Education, the Greece Central School District, the Rochester City School District and the East Rochester School District. Digital Afternoons provides technical assistance to youth, 16-21 years old, who will eventually become "digitally certified" by completing a rigorous on-line curriculum over a 12-week period. This training was carried out over the past winter at the student's school, after normal school hours. Once completed, the youth became eligible for internships with participating Monroe County businesses. Rochester Works will support the internships by providing funding to companies for the intern's wages, as well as other program-related assistance.

Jessica began her internship at the Youth Bureau on July 5<sup>th</sup>. She has been assigned to update our Youth Yellow Pages and is also applying her Power Point skills to create a presentation for youth focus groups. Jessica is a huge "plus" to our department with her positive attitude, pleasant nature and impressive work ethic. The Youth Bureau couldn't be happier with our partnership with Digital Afternoons and Rochester Works.

Our County Executive will recognize the students who have completed this program, as well as all the businesses that supported and participated in this program.

I was recently asked to join Police Chief David Moore's Police Activities League board. Chief Moore is committed to having his officers improve their relationship with youth and to engage them in healthy and positive activities together. A board of directors has been established and will work to ensure the Leagues success. ✕

*Youth Advocate Awards cont. from page 1*

**Devon Wilson.**

*Youth Awards for ages 13-15:* Neil Dambra, Matthew Fowler, Jennifer Liano, Melissa Monet Gayle, Rainie Spiva.

*Youth Awards for ages 12 and under:* Caroline Floeser, Jillian K. McCord, William McGrane, Ashley Nunez, J. T. Paganelli. ✕

East High School; it will run for six weeks and is entirely free. There are still openings in the program and all youth ages 8-16 are welcome to register at this time. The program runs from 1:30 to 4 pm, Monday thru Friday and only sneakers are required; tennis racquets and all other equipment are provided. Please contact Christine Lennon at either (585)753-6459 or [clennon@monroecounty.gov](mailto:clennon@monroecounty.gov) if you have any questions or are interested in registering a youth. ☒



**Dates: Monday - Friday, July 10 - August 18, 2006**

**Ages: Boys and Girls, 8-16 yrs. old**

**Registration Begins: NOW**

**Cost: FREE**

**Program Location: East High School  
Tennis Courts, 1801 East Main St.**

**Rochester, NY 14609**

**1:30 - 4 PM**

## **Positive Youth Development Conference 2006: *Taking It Home!***

This year, the conference was held in Albany, NY and was an enthusiastic occasion of youth and youth workers coming together to discuss successful strategies and practices.

The conference is a derivative of the Assets Coming Together (ACT) for Youth initiatives and has been taking place for the past 6 years. ACT for Youth currently funds several counties across New York State, which helps communities promote the health and well-being of young people, using strategies of positive youth development.

One Youth, Danielle Favret, recounted the impact of the "Battle of the Bands" that took place in Jefferson County. This event attracted hundreds of youth to a place filled with positive and encouraging activities, including a concert competition. She stated that being a part of the planning process made her proud and confident. This is just one example of how involvement empowers youth because of the ACT for Youth funding.

All were inspired by the words of Dr. Pedro Noguera, who spoke of urban sociology, in accordance with his personal research. He is a professor at the Steinhardt School of Education at New York University, the Director of the Metropolitan Center for Urban Education and the co-Director of the Institute for the study of Globalization and Education in Metropolitan Settings (IGEMS). He has written articles demonstrating that youth who have a strong early education are far more likely to have a higher level of student achievement. His writing also included the impact of first and second generation immigrants and its effects on education, particularly immigrants and its effects on education, particularly in the urban setting. It was eye opening to hear the perspective of a well-versed gentleman and the factors that influence youth development.

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## **YAR Endowment Initiative**

*By Keisha French*

Rochester Monroe County YAR is a community based youth philanthropy program that provides small grants to young people to design and carry out community service projects that address social issues or problems and contribute to change in the community. Youth As Resources (YAR) has been in existence and through various name changes and mission agreements since 1996 in the Monroe County area. At this time, the Rochester-Monroe County Youth Bureau and Rochester Area Community Foundation are the sole financial supporters in the local area.

The Youth As Resources board would like to further our financial independence and community wide outreach by establishing an endowment fund to sustain and support the longevity of this philanthropy-based program. The youth are actively creating a power point presentation, a team of presenters, and creating a plan of action in which to attract local businesses, individual investors, and community support in our efforts.

The board is aware of the annual budget cuts made towards youth based services and programs state wide, and we are striving to preserve the positive resources within this community. Youth As Resources seeks to empower and engage youth as partners with adults in community change. We are firm believers that youth are not just the leaders of today, but the stakeholders of our future.

If you are interested in investing in the lives of our youth, then please contact Keisha French at 585-753-6456 or e-mail all questions to [kfrench@monroecounty.gov](mailto:kfrench@monroecounty.gov). Let us help you see the community through the eyes of youth. ☒



examples of how positive youth development has a combined impact as opposed to prevention and intervention techniques. This positive approach is moving away from a society that treats symptoms and on to forming healthy habits. Teaching healthy habits and an optimistic outlook are the best way to approach youth that are still the clay on the wheel.

The wonderful part about the ACT for Youth approach is that everyone can partake in this effort. It's a simple movement from a deficit-based model to an asset-based model, as identified by the Search Institute. If any organization is interested in positive youth development there are a few key focus points: collaboration, youth voice, and positive outcomes. By getting the community involved and defining strategies to involve youth, a program will be more likely to successfully sustain in the long run. Once involving youth, it is important to allow roles to evolve in such a way that youth have an opportunity to prepare and participate in program, as well as creating avenues of shared leadership.

Overall, the conference was a great bonding experience for all youth and youth workers. Being a part of the ACT for Youth initiative and positive youth development is clearly not something that an individual leaves at work or school, rather, a positive outlook that reflects on an individual's whole life. ☒

**Rochester-Monroe County Youth Bureau Staff:**

Karla F. Boyce, Joan Bickweat, Jessica Callahan (Rochester Works!), Christina Dandino, Keisha French, Roni Gianvecchio, Christine Lennon (AmeriCorps), Kathy Rivera, Marie Siracuse, Roseann Smith, John Wadsworth.



**The Youth As Resources board.** From Left to Right: Nancy Johns-Price, Valerie Scott, Isiah Johnson, Tyesha Scott, India Green, Cletissa Hogue, Molly Flanagan, King Swank, Keisha French, and Wendy Latham

## Local Youth Achievements

The youth within Rochester are accomplishing great things and though they may not be as famous as J-Mac, they are all bright, shining stars. The Rochester-Monroe County Youth Bureau recognizes that it is difficult for youth to defy peer pressure and make the right choices. Here are a few examples of youth stepping up to, not only making healthy decisions, but also doing something to help others.

Isiah Johnson is a Rochester youth serving on the Youth As Resources Board and has recently been presented with the Malik Evans Award of Outstanding Community Service. Mr. Johnson exemplifies a true philanthropist, balancing sports and school while still finding time to participate in volunteer activities such as: the DHS Mural, lead education, Healthy Home tours, and much more. He even had an opportunity to present research to Hillary Clinton that demonstrated a strong correlation between areas of lead poisoning and acts of violence.

Youth from Sector 8 (located in the northeast side of the city) have participated in the first phase of an Asset Mapping project led by The Community Place of Greater Rochester. They have been identifying the positive qualities within their neighborhood, using a survey they wrote. Now youth are in the process of entering data that will be used to make maps for the whole community.

In Honeoye Falls, one youth took the initiative to write all the local churches, pleading for funds to help the Monroe County Foster Care Children. This effort ignited an energy that caught on like wildfire, influencing many businesses including banks, schools, Boy and Girl Scout troops, local legions, etc. to donate to the Fleece Blanket Project. This one young lady, sparked an entire community to come together to create No-Sew Fleece blankets that would complete the original goal of a fleece blanket for every Foster Care Child, over 1,000 total blankets.

And that's just to name a few! ☒

**Rochester-Monroe County Youth Board Members:**

Hussain Ahmed, David Albright, Mazi Bakari, Margaret Burns, Joanne Coast, Kathy Cole, Bobbi Drew, Cortney Harris, Joan Hildebrand, Paula Howk, Greg McDonald, Kathryn Piacentino, April Purdie, Fred Rion, George Romell, Elaine Spaul PhD, Jeff Adair (Ex-Officio City Council).



Youth Matters  
written and edited  
by Christine Lennon